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# A Plea to Goldberg

## Poison Gas in Yemen

By Roscoe Drummond

ARTHUR J. GOLDBERG,  
U.S. AMBASSADOR TO  
UNITED NATIONS.

Dear Mr. Ambassador:  
In your recent statement  
you express "strong concern" over Egypt's use of  
poison gas in Yemen, but  
announce

that the United States "is  
not taking the lead" in  
bringing the issue before  
the United Nations.  
In all candor,



Mr. Ambassador, Drummond  
why not?

You say "we are deeply  
disturbed" but prefer to let  
somebody else take the initiative.

In all candor, is a let-somebody-else-do-it policy good  
enough for the United States  
in America in a matter  
which involves violation  
of the Geneva Treaty, transgression of the U.N. Charter  
and a heinous offense  
against humanity?

Isn't this the kind of international crime which the  
U.N. was created to deal  
with and which the U.N. is  
capable of dealing with?

But the U.N. can do nothing  
unless the issue is  
brought before it.

Is it really good enough  
for the United States to pursue

a course of let-somebody-else-do-it?

YOU KNOW as do the  
rest of us that under present  
circumstances nobody  
else is going to do it.

The Yemeni people who  
are being gas-bombed can't  
get their protest to the U.N.  
because their government  
does not represent them.  
The present Yemeni government  
either approves the  
use of poison gas against its  
dissident people or is so  
completely the tool of Cairo  
that it can't do otherwise.

And it seems clear that no  
other government is going to  
stand up first at the U.N.—  
at least not in time to accomplish  
anything—and say for the  
conscience of the world: This must stop!

NO ARAB state is going to  
do it. No neutral state is going  
to do it.

If there were a real choice  
between the United States  
"not taking the lead," as you  
put it, and somebody else  
doing so, it might be understandable  
for the United States to yield the  
initiative to another.

But, Mr. Ambassador, there is no such choice. Nobody  
else is ready to take the lead.  
Nothing is being done and nothing is  
going to be done to demand an end  
to this hideous crime unless the  
United States takes the lead to demand  
that something be done.

To any objective observer the facts are not in dispute.  
The on-the-spot investigations by medical teams of the  
International Red Cross confirm the repeated use of  
poison gas against soldiers and civilians in villages held  
by the Yemeni rebels. The gas has been delivered to its  
targets by Soviet planes flown by Egyptian pilots.

Not a very pretty situation. It cries out for U.N. action.  
The people of the poisoned Yemeni villages have cried out for U.N. help.

THERE HAS BEEN no U.N. action. There has been no U.N. help despite the fact that the Geneva convention is being broken, the U.N. Charter flouted and humanity

At the moment a voice or two is being raised by Arab leaders urging Nasser to get out of Yemen entirely, withdraw his 25,000 troops and end his illegal intervention. But exactly such an agreement was signed by the U.A.R. and Saudi Arabia and nothing came of it. Perhaps the losses sustained by Egypt in the six-day war with Israel will force Nasser to retire from Yemen—for a time. But you can't count on it.

The issue remains: Nasser's pilots flying Soviet-provided planes have been repeatedly using poison gas against Yemeni villages. Is the U.N. going to stand by and let the resolution against the use of poison gas, which it once passed overwhelmingly, lie in tatters?

Is the United States going to stand by and refuse to take the initiative on the sterile theory of let-somebody-else-do-it?

Mr. Ambassador, there are quite a few of us who hope not.